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SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR EMBASSY KABUL

REF: KABUL 4029

¶1. Post welcomes and grants country clearance for the visit of Ambassador Neumann and the rest of the Embassy Kabul country team from September 12, 2006 to September 13, 2006. The purpose of the visit is consultations with Embassy Islamabad.

¶2. Control officer for the visit will be Political Officer, Mohammed Motiwala. He can be reached at the following numbers: Embassy: 92-51-208-0000; Office: 92-51-208-2624; Fax: 92-51-208-2537; Cell: 0300-501-2202.

¶3. Accommodations for Ambassador Neumann and his aide have been arranged at the EMR. The remaining members of the delegation will stay at the Capital Grand Guest House. The guest house contact number is: 92 51 282-2881.

¶4. The control officer and driver will meet visitors upon arrival at the airport in Islamabad. Transportation will be provided to the airport on the day of departure.

¶5. Visitors must/must obtain separate post clearance if they plan to visit any of the three Mission Pakistan consulates (Karachi, Peshawar, Lahore) or any other areas under the jurisdiction of the consulates. Most travel outside of Islamabad will require separate post clearance. Post clearance for the consulates should be requested via cable to the consulate(s) on the planned itinerary.

¶6. **Visas:** Everyone arriving in Pakistan must/must have a valid visa. If you do not have a valid visa, you will be denied entry.

If you will be in Pakistan on TDY for more than 30 days, ensure that you have a multiple entry visa that shows "Work at the U.S. Embassy" or "Official Business" as the purpose of your visit. If your visa does not contain this language, your visa cannot be extended or renewed while in Pakistan and you will have to physically leave the country to renew or extend it.

¶7. **Electronic Equipment:** Official travelers on temporary duty, including non-State personnel, must coordinate the transport of any USG provided electronic or photographic equipment (to include laptops/electronic notebooks), and receive RSO authorization prior to introducing the equipment into the Chancery. No connectivity is allowed to State's unclassified or classified networks. Personal electronic or

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photographic equipment as well as camera/video capable cell phones are not permitted in the Chancery.

¶8. **Security:** Islamabad and the three constituent consulates in Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar are high-threat posts. Employees assigned to Pakistan are unaccompanied and receive danger pay. The Department of State Travel Warning for

Pakistan asks U.S. citizens to defer non-essential travel to Pakistan because of the continued high security concerns about terrorists in Pakistan. The Embassy approves only essential official travel to Pakistan. All official visitors to Islamabad must adhere to Embassy security standards and procedures, and those staying more than one week must attend a security briefing held every Tuesday at 10 a.m. TDY travel outside of Islamabad requires RSO clearance. Travelers to the consulates must follow RSO consulate security procedures.

The potential for continued threats to Americans in Pakistan from Al-Qaida and other extremist elements remains real. A suicide bomber killed two Consulate employees at the U.S. Consulate in Karachi in March 2006. A grenade attack against the Protestant International Church in Islamabad killed two Embassy members and injured several others in March 2002. American, Western, and Christian targets continue to be threatened and attacked. Anti-Americanism remains strong among certain elements of the population. For further information about travel to Pakistan, U.S. citizens should consult the Department of State's Consular Information Sheet for Pakistan, available via the internet at

<http://travel.state.gov>.

All DOD military and civilian personnel on TDY, TAD, or PCS orders to Pakistan are required to notify the Force Protection Detachment (FPD), US Embassy, Pakistan of their travel plan/itinerary. Notifications must be made well in advance prior to arrival in country, principally if FPD support is needed. Upon arrival into country, DOD personnel are required to check in with the FPD to receive a current threat briefing, as well as to be reminded of applicable force protection countermeasures. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in either denial of current or future country clearances. FPD e-mail addresses are as follows: FPDPakistan@state.sgov.gov and FPDPakistan@state.gov

19. Hotel Security: Security at major hotels in Pakistan has been generally good. However, extremist elements know that westerners stay in and congregate at these hotels as evinced by the May 2002 car bomb attack outside the Sheraton hotel in Karachi that killed nearly a dozen French engineers. As well, an October 2004 bombing in the lobby of the Islamabad Marriott injured a number of people, several seriously.

1A. Post uses the Serena and Marriott Hotels for TDY visitors. Based on our continuing review of the security programs at both hotels, they may continue to be used to house short-term (seven days or less) TDY visitors. All agencies and sections that sponsor long-term TDY personnel (eight days or longer) should consider, where possible, the use of guest houses, residences currently occupied by PCS or TDY employees of their agency or section, or houses rented expressly for the use of long-term TDY personnel.

1B. The guidelines below must be followed by all short-term TDY personnel (seven days or less):

-- TDY personnel should minimize the time they spend in the hotel lobby and adjoining areas.

-- TDY personnel should establish a transportation schedule and adhere to it. They should not congregate in the lobby area waiting for transportation, but should arrive in the lobby for pick-up approximately one minute before scheduled departure.

-- The Marriott Hotel has a private dining room for Embassy visitor use. Buffet breakfast service will be available there. TDY personnel are also encouraged to take lunch or dinner there, ordered directly from one of the restaurants located in the hotel. There is no extra charge for this service. Room service is also available at no extra charge.

-- TDY personnel should report any security concerns directly and immediately to the Regional Security Office.

1C. The Serena and the Marriott have been instructed to house Embassy personnel in the back, away from the main roads that run adjacent to the front/main entrances of the hotels. Also, since fire fighting is not up to U.S. standards, post recommends that TDY personnel stay on lower floors in the hotels and familiarize themselves with the emergency exits on their floors immediately after check-in. Valuables such as

money or jewelry should also not be left behind or hidden in the room.

¶10. Public Transportation: for safety reasons, Americans are prohibited from using taxis and all public transportation. The Embassy requires that official visitors use its motor pool.

Emergency telephone numbers:

American Embassy Islamabad	92-51-208-0000
Marine Security Guard (24 hrs)	92-51-208-2338
Regional Security Office	92-51-208-2203/2204
American Consulate Karachi	92-021-520-4200
American Consulate Lahore	92-042-603-4000
American Consulate Peshawar	92-091-526-8800

¶11. Embassy Motor Pool Services: Post maintains a 24-hour motor pool. However, the demands on the motor pool have increased considerably since September 2001 and motor pool services may not be immediately available when you need them.

Accordingly, Post strongly urges all TDYers either to provide a fund cite in their travel orders or come with sufficient resources in hand for the purpose of renting a vehicle and driver (if necessary). The Procurement Section at Post can assist TDYers with vehicle rentals. Motor Pool cars and drivers are available for airport pick up and drop-offs. An International Driver's License is not valid in Pakistan.

¶12. Health: The Embassy Health Unit has provided the following information to aid visitors and temporary duty employees in Pakistan:

¶1A. Facilities: There are health units at the embassy and each of the three consulates. The Islamabad Health unit is staffed by a Regional Medical Officer, a Foreign Service Nurse Practitioner and two RNs. It provides routine medical care and basic laboratory services during the workweek. It does not supply medications for chronic medical conditions; these must be brought with you. The facilities in Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar are extremely limited in the services they provide and are staffed by part-time local medical providers. Official visitors traveling to or working at those locations should bring all personal medicines with them including over-the-counter drugs.

¶1B. Access: Access to the Health Units at all Mission Pakistan posts other than 'good samaritan' care is limited to American citizen employees and contractors who are eligible for Health Unit services. Good samaritan care is emergency care designed to stabilize a patient until s/he can reach or be reached by local medical practitioners.

The following American citizen employees and contractors are ineligible/ineligible for Health Unit services:

NON-PERSONAL SERVICES (COMMERCIAL) CONTRACTORS

DIRECT HIRE EMPLOYEES PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED TO PAKISTAN without a current medical clearance from the Department of State's Office of Medical Services (MED).

TDY DIRECT HIRE EMPLOYEES ABROAD FOR MORE THAN 60 DAYS IN A CALENDAR YEAR without a current MED clearance.

PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTORS (PSCs) unless all of the following conditions have been met:

-- The PSC has a current MED clearance.

-- The PSC's contract stipulates that s/he is eligible for MED services and requires the individual to have health insurance coverage overseas.

-- The employing agency is paying for medical services under ICASS and guarantees funding for the direct charge of local hospitalization and medical evacuation.

Agencies should review personal services contracts BEFORE the arrival of PSCs to determine the status of Health Unit access and must inform the Health Unit of eligible PSCs before they arrive. PSCs must submit documentation proving eligibility for services to the Health Unit.

The Health Unit can provide a copy of the Health Unit Handbook to employees and contractors who are ineligible for services. The Handbook contains a list of physicians to whom the Health Unit refers patients and a list of acceptable hospital facilities and pharmacies in Islamabad, Karachi, Peshawar, and Lahore.

I.C. **Food and Water-borne Illnesses:** Visitors to Pakistan are at high risk for water-borne and gastrointestinal illnesses. Careful attention to the choice of food and beverages helps to reduce the risks. Avoid salad bars and buffets while eating at local restaurants; a la carte items are your safest bet. Meat, eggs, and vegetables should always be thoroughly cooked or steamed. Safe foods include steaming hot dishes, rice, pasta, cooked vegetables served hot, and bread products. Foods that are moist and served at room temperature, especially peeled fruits, salads, sauces, egg-based foods, mayonnaise-based dishes and buffet offerings are risky. Avoid ice cream as well.

I.D. **Drinks:** Safe drinks include hot tea, coffee, and carbonated beverages. Assume all tap water is contaminated contrary to notices occasionally posted in some hotels or elsewhere. The only exception to this rule is the tap water on the embassy compound. Commercially available water bottled in Pakistan has been found to be inconsistently safe for consumption. Bottled water sold in our commissary has been judged safe. Be sure the seals have not been broken. Remember that freezing does not make water safe, so avoid ice cubes unless you know they have been made from potable water.

Personal portable water purification systems are available commercially at nominal cost and can easily be transported in luggage as they are no larger than a tall mug. These devices protect against bacteria as well as viruses and protozoa.

I.E. **Malaria:** Malaria is endemic to various regions in Pakistan, and the risks of infection vary depending on location, altitude and season. During the rainy season all visitors are advised to take prophylaxis, especially those traveling outside the major metropolitan centers or who make frequent trips between the consulates and Embassy. Mefloquine is the preferred prophylaxis and should be brought with you during travel as it is unavailable in country except at the mission health units. Doxycycline is an alternative and is available in country. In conjunction with medication, visitors must also take measures to reduce contact with mosquitoes, such as wearing clothing that covers most of the body and using an insect repellent containing DEET.

I.F. **Immunizations:** Visitor immunization records should be reviewed by the Department's Immunization Clinic prior to departure. For short-term visitors the following immunizations are recommended: hepatitis a, hepatitis b, typhoid, and tetanus in addition to usual childhood immunizations. The rabies series is also recommended for Pakistan and should be completed before arriving in country. The Health Unit in Islamabad can provide most vaccinations except smallpox, which is only available in Washington. The consulate health units can provide a limited number of vaccinations depending on type needed and health unit staffing.

I.G. All TDY travelers are urged to take annual flu vaccination before international travel. Vaccine will not be available after the current vaccination program is complete in November. Tamiflu, the flu treatment drug, is not available in country. If travelers wish to obtain supplies for travel, they will need to consult their local provider in the U.S. for a supply prior to travel to Pakistan.

I.H. **Emergency Medical Services:** Emergency medical care is extremely limited in Pakistan even in major cities. The

health units keep up-to-date lists of available facilities in cities in which the embassy and consulates are located. Travelers should arrange for medical evacuation insurance either personally or through their sponsoring agency prior to their arrival in country.

II. Automobile and Pedestrian Safety: Overseas automobile accidents remain a major cause of death of expatriates abroad and Pakistan is no exception. Further, vehicles in Pakistan are driven on the left side of the road, which adds another dimension to automobile and pedestrian safety if you are not used to this traffic pattern. Avoid driving at night if at all possible. Use seat belts in both rear and front seats, and insist that your driver maintains a safe speed. Stay alert crossing streets and intersections, especially after dark.

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